

REMARKS

This is a complete response to the outstanding Office Action mailed June 29, 2006. Upon entry of the enclosed claim amendments, claims 28-38 remain pending in the present application.

I. Response to Claim Rejections Based on Obviousness

In the Office Action, claims 28-36 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over (Applicant's Admitted Prior Art, hereinafter referred to as "AAPA") in view of Rackin (U.S. Patent 4,674,083, hereinafter referred to as "Rackin"). Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection.

The Office Action selectively takes portions of Rackin to attempt to assemble an obviousness argument. The reference Rackin appears to be further off-base than previous references cited in prior office actions. Rackin discloses a time division multiplexed switch with time slots that may be concatenated or subdivided on a port-by-port basis without any modification to the switch. Rackin does not disclose a switching apparatus being connected to a public network and communicating over a local area network with a second switching apparatus. Rackin does not

specifically disclose being connected to another switch. Rackin's disclosure of the issue of blocking not being a problem when the number of receiving ports does not exceed the number of available transmission path, relates to the switch itself not a communication path with another switch. Rackin is referring to expansion and configuration of the switch itself (i.e. reconfiguring the switch and modifying the number receiving/transmission ports).

Applicant claims a switching device interface with a number of channels to couple to the second switching device equal to B, wherein B (number of switching device channels) is greater than or equal to T (number of trunk channels) plus S (number of agent station channels). Rackin does not disclose or suggest setting the number channels used to interface with another switching device. Not only does the teaching of Rackin not relate to Applicant's claimed invention, the Office Action also does not supply a disclosure of providing channels over LAN connecting the two switching devices or a motivation for limiting the channels over the LAN connecting the two switching devices. Therefore, for at least this reason claim 28 is allowable.

The Applicant also respectfully submits that patent US

4,228,535 to Workman et al. does not cure the above deficiencies. Therefore, claim 28 should be allowed for at least the above reasons. The Applicant also respectfully submits that since claims 29-38 depend on independent claim 28, claims 29-38 contain all limitations of independent claim 28. Since independent claim 28 should be allowed, as argued herein, pending dependent claims 29-38 should be allowed as a matter of law for at least this reason. In re Fine, 5 U.S.P.Q.2d 1596, 1608 (Fed. Cir. 1988).

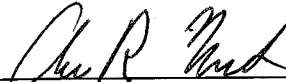
CONCLUSION

In light of the foregoing comments and for at least the reasons set forth above, Applicant respectfully submits that all objections have been traversed, rendered moot and/or accommodated, and that presently pending claims 28-38 are in condition for allowance. Applicant has responded to all of the Examiner's requests. Favorable reconsideration and allowance of the present application and the presently pending claims are hereby courteously requested. The examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned, Applicant's attorney of record, to facilitate advancement of the present application.

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Respectfully submitted,

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